

Surgical physiology

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Bile is produced by the liver and stored in the gallbladder before being released into the duodenum. The liver excretes bile at approximately 40 mL/h. As it leaves the liver its composition is 97% water; the remaining 3% consists of bile salts (cholic and chenodeoxycholic acids, deoxycholic and lithocholic acids), phospholipids, cholesterol and bilirubin. About 95% of bile salts are reabsorbed in the terminal ileum and returned to the liver (enterohepatic circulation).

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